

Park Program to Mark 4-H Celebration

Livingston County members will join the nearly five million young people nationwide in observing National 4-H Week, Oct. 4-10.

A Recognition Day event is scheduled Sunday at Letchworth

State Park. The event, which is planned for the nearly 400 4-H members in Livingston County and their families, will feature a dish to pass picnic, a decorated pumpkin contest and games. A special recognition ceremony will

be the highlight of the program, honoring outstanding achievements of 4-H members and volunteer leaders. Members will also be releasing helium filled 4-H balloons to celebrate the week.

Last year in Livingston County,

more than 2,000 youth were involved in 4-H through clubs, special interest programs and school enrichment activities. Youth between the ages of eight and 19 participated in nearly 100 different project areas including nutrition and health, conservation field days, animal care, natural resources and leadership.

Conducted by the Cooperative Extension service at Cornell University, 4-H is available to boys and girls, eight to 19 years old. For more information about programs, contact the Livingston County 4-H office at 158 S. Main St., in Mt. Morris, phone 658-3250.

Listen Veteran

Dr. Nicholas F. Salles, New York director of Veterans' Affairs, was named the nation's outstanding state director by his peers at the convention of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs in Atlantic City.

Dr. Salles, accepting the Melvin T. Dixon Award, commented, "I have always seen my task in caring for New York's veterans as a lay ministry, an opportunity to serve God by serving the men and women who defended this nation in times of great danger."

Stressing that the award was based on programs, services and advocacy in behalf of veterans, Dr. Salles commended the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs, which he heads. "I am so justly proud of our excellent and dedicated field counselors, the Division's management team, and the stenographers who are the veterans' first contact with our services that I could hug them all! This award also honors Governor Mario M. Cuomo, whose compas-

sion and leadership have put New York's services for veterans in the forefront."

Dr. Salles, a professor emeritus from St. John's College who served as a bombardier in World War II, is the first New Yorker to receive the Dixon Award in the two decades since it was established. Recipients are selected by a committee of their peers composed of past honorees.

The Division of Veterans Affairs has expanded its programs under Dr. Salles to meet the changing needs of the veteran population, bolstering its highly respected counseling services with advocacy, research and training programs. In July, when Governor Cuomo announced that New York would receive a \$16.5 million grant from the Veterans Administration for construction of a veteran's nursing home on Long Island, he commented, "Much of the credit for realization of this project must go to our State Director of Veterans' Affairs, Dr. Nicholas F. Salles."

By Edward C. Balthasar
State Veteran Counselor

The New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs has offices in every county file claims and advocate in behalf of veterans and their families. For help with your questions, contact the counselor at Livingston County Campus in Mt. Morris.

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Native of Mt. Morris Bellamy Gave Birth To Nation's Pledge

BY ROBERT OAKES
Hornell Historian

Each time I drive into the Village of Mount Morris in nearby Livingston County, my memory is jogged by the fact that here is the birthplace of Francis Bellamy, author of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. A sign denotes the fact that Bellamy was born in the home which still stands in splendor as does the pledge itself through which all Americans vow their love to the greatest nation on earth.

It was back in 1939 when Bellamy was duly credited with the writing of the pledge, but up until that time the honor was bestowed upon James B. Upham, editor of The Youth's Companion which had been merged with one of the most popular boys' magazines, The American Boy. It was 95 years ago when the pledge was written and honors to the Mount Morris native were long overdue. But let's let Bellamy tell the story like it was:

"At the beginning of the 1890s, patriotism and nationalism were at a low ebb and the patriotic ardor of the Civil War was an old story. The nation at that time was experiencing a period of great prosperity and the chase for what people referred to as the 'nimble dollar' was uppermost in the minds of a majority of Americans. The time was ripe for the reawakening of simple Americanism and leaders in that movement rightly felt that patriotic education should begin in the public schools."

"Now, how should the vista be widened so as to teach the national fundamentals, Bellamy asked. He continues his story:

"I laid down my pencil and tried to pass our history in review. It took in the sayings of Washington, the arguments of Hamilton, the Webster-Hayne debate, the speeches of Seward and Lincoln, the Civil War. After many attempts, all that pictured itself to three words, 'one nation indivisible.' To reach that compact brevity, conveying the facts of a single nationality and of an indivisibility both of states and common interests, was as I recall the most arduous phase to the task and the discarded experiments as phrasing overflowed the scrap basket."

"But what of the present and future of this indivisible nation here presented for allegiance? Why were the old and fought-out issues always to be issues to be fought for? Especially, what were the basic national doctrines bearing upon the acute questions already agitating the public mind?

"Here was a temptation to repeat the historic slogan of the French Revolution imported by Jefferson, 'liberty, fraternity, equality.' But that was quickly rejected as fraternity was too removed of realization and as equality was a dubious word. What doctrines then would everybody agree upon as the basis of Americanism? Liberty and justice were surely basic, were undebatable, and were all that any one nation could handle. If they were exercised for all, they involved the spirit of equality and fraternity. So that final line came with a cheering rush. As a clincher, it seemed to assemble the past and to promise the future."

"And that's the real story of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag as the author lived it and wrote it. Bellamy died in 1931, but his memory as a patriotic American will live long, perpetuated in part by the historic marker in front of his birthplace in Mount Morris and most of all by the millions upon millions of times Americans recite his pledge to pay respect and vow allegiance to their country.

"Mr. Upham and I spent many hours in considering a revision of this salute. Each one suggested that the other write a new salute

and it was my thought that a vow of loyalty or allegiance to the flag should be the dominant idea. I especially stressed the word 'allegiance' so Mr. Upham suggested that I try it out on that line.

"It was on a warm evening in August of '92, in my office in Boston, that I shut myself in my room alone to formulate the actual pledge. Beginning with the word 'allegiance,' I first decided that 'pledge' was a better school word than 'vow or swear' and that the first person singular should be used, and that my flag was preferable to 'the.'

"When these words, 'I pledge allegiance to my flag,' looked up at me from the scratch paper, the start appeared promising. Then for the further reach: should it be 'country,' 'nation,' or 'republic'? Republic won because it distinguished the form of government chosen by the fathers and established by the revolution. The true reason for allegiance to the flag is the republic for which it stands."

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